

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: March 17, 2000

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on March 10, 2000

FROM: William E. Muno, Director
Superfund Division

TO: Francis X. Lyons
Regional Administrator

David A. Ullrich
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities, other significant developments, and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Response (Mercury), Mulberry Street Mercury Site, Springfield, Ohio

On March 4, 2000, the Springfield Fire Department requested United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) assistance in containing a mercury spill in a residential area in Springfield, Ohio (approximately 15 children had caused the release by breaking mercury switches that were in a drum by the hundreds in the backyard of an abandoned house and then by tracking the mercury about). On March 5, 2000, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Steve Renninger, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), the Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START), and the Environmental Response Team (ERT) responded. Ohio EPA contractors stabilized the 8 outdoor mercury spill locations and covered them with plastic prior to the soil removal conducted by U.S. EPA. The Clark County Health Department identified 32 indoor locations (residences and an elementary school) to be investigated. U.S. EPA, through ERT and the Response, Engineering, and Analytical Contract (REAC), conducted air sampling of the indoor locations and provided rapid analysis through the REAC laboratory in Edison, New Jersey. Starting

on March 5, 2000, families in the six residences found to have elevated levels of mercury were relocated with the aid of the local Red Cross. From March 5-10, 2000, U.S. EPA and Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractors successfully decontaminated the residences to below the action level set by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry (ATSDR). On March 10, the families returned to their homes. The Clark County Health Department agreed to reimburse families for contaminated items (clothes, furniture, and the like) which required disposal, and conducted biological sampling that revealed elevated mercury levels in children (chelation therapy was not required). During the response, U.S. EPA collected 200 cubic yards of mercury contaminated soil and debris for disposal.

Contact: Steven Renninger (513-569-7539)

Response (Oil Spill), Chanse Petroleum Company, Ashtabula, Ohio

On February 28, 2000, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Jim Augustyn responded to a request for assistance from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) at an oil spill in Ashtabula County, Ohio. The oil spill was a result of a broken natural gas service line from a Chanse Petroleum Corporation Production well. Equipment failure of the oil/gas separator caused crude oil to be pumped through the gas service line which subsequently ruptured. The Ohio EPA OSC working with the potentially responsible party (PRP) to undertake a cleanup action, which started on February 25, 2000, was not satisfied with the PRP's cleanup efforts and requested U.S. EPA assistance. OSC Augustyn responded with a U.S. EPA Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) member and issued a Notice of Federal Interest to the PRP. OSC Augustyn instructed the PRP to take appropriate actions to address the release, and the PRP agreed to hire additional personnel and equipment. OSC Augustyn and a START member remained onsite to oversee cleanup.

Additional oil spills were located within the same oil production field on other properties operated by the Chanse Petroleum Corporation. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas, ordered the company to shut down the oil field pending further investigation. Approximately 6 spills have been identified to date, 2 of

which have impacted the waters of the State.

Contact: Jim Augustyn (440-250-1742)

Site Inspection, J & L Landfill Superfund Site, Rochester Hills, Michigan

On March 1, 2000, a site inspection was conducted at the J & L Landfill Superfund site in Rochester Hills, Michigan. The purpose of the inspection was to record residential private water wells in the immediate area for potential hook-up to public water supply. A residential well survey is scheduled to be sent out in March, so the homes can receive public water this year.

The J & L Landfill site remedy includes a multi-layer Resource Conservation and Recovery Act hazardous waste cap, and operation & maintenance monitoring. The property was previously used for sand and gravel mining before becoming a Superfund site.

Contact: Jeff Gore (312-886-6552)

Meeting with Congressman (Cleanup Discussions), Savanna Army Depot Activity Superfund Site, Washington, D.C.

On March 2, 2000, at the request of U.S. Congressman Donald Manzullo, Superfund Division Director, William E. Muno, and David Seely attended a meeting in Washington D.C. on the Savanna Army Depot Activity Superfund site in Savanna, Illinois. The meeting included the Army's top environmental official and other senior level officials responsible for environmental cleanup, the Director of U.S. EPA Headquarters Federal Facilities Restoration & Reuse Office, representatives of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Local Redevelopment Authority, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA), and representatives from Senator Fitzgerald's and Senator Durbin's offices. The meeting was held to resolve issues relating to the investigation and cleanup of unexploded ordnance and to discuss reuse of the property. Congressman Manzullo pressed the Army to move off

their statistical investigatory approach, which would only investigate about 2 to 6 percent, on average, of the potentially contaminated property. The meeting ended with all parties committing to work together and to look for demonstration pilot projects to better detect buried unexploded ordnance.

Other issues discussed were: security when the facility closes Army operations on March 18, 2000; public access after closure and prior to cleanup; USFWS access to manage the resources; Army funding for cleanup; and, cleanup schedule impacts on the Local Redevelopment Authority's ability to promote property reuse.

Contact: David Seely (312-886-7058)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Preliminary Site Investigations (Vermiculite/Asbestos), 4 Sites in Ohio and Dearborn, Michigan

From March 1-9, 2000, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Augustyn conducted four site investigations at former vermiculite exfoliation facilities in the State of Ohio. OSC Kurt Grunert conducted one site investigation in Dearborn Michigan. One Ohio based company has turned into 17 additional leads that will require further investigation. All preliminary investigations for sites in Ohio and Michigan are scheduled to be completed by March 10, 2000.

Contacts: Jim Augustyn (440-250-1742)
Kurt Grunert (734-692-7684)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES

Annual Tribal General Assistance Program Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois

During March 7-9, 2000, Glenn Cekus, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), participated in the Annual Tribal General Assistance Program Annual Conference, which was held in the U.S. EPA Region 5 Chicago offices. Mr. Cekus had face-to-face meetings with Tribes

interested in modifying, correcting, or finalizing the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) related priorities in their Tribal Environmental Agreements. He met with representatives of the Oneida, Bad River, Fond du Lac, Menominee, and Mille Lacs Reservations to address issues, such as Tribal EPCRA organization, chemical emergency planning, response exercises, hazard analysis, and grants.

A related topic discussed was the planned OCEPP experiment to partner with Tribal educational institutions to provide Computer Aided Management Emergency Operations (CAMEO) instruction to high school and junior college students. The students could then use their CAMEO skills to help in emergency planning on the Reservation. Three tribes expressed interest in the concept.

Contact: Glenn Cekus (312-353-6449)

cc: Steve Herman (OECA)
Barry Breen (OECA)
Tim Fields (OSWER)
Steve Luftig (OSWER)
Larry Zaragoza (OSWER)
Region 5 State Superfund Coordinators
Division/Office Directors
ORA State Coordinators
Regional Team Managers